

Derry Days by Origamidragons

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Summary:

Bobby Newby meets the clown in Derry, in the summer of 1957.

Or: Bob made some omissions when telling Will his story.

Derry Days

Author's Note:

- Translation into Русский available: [Денек в Дерри // Derry Days](#) by [Flight_of_fancy](#)

The circus was so *loud*. That was what little Bobby Newby kept thinking, his mind skipping over the thought like a scratched record. It was never this loud in Hawkins. The woods all around seemed to have a muting effect on the town.

Derry was different. It was more than twice the size of Hawkins, for one thing, and had probably three times the population. Everything was noise and light, and it was incredibly exciting. That said, Bobby's mother had only barely agreed to let him go to the circus.

"There's been some kids disappearing in Derry, these past couple of months," she'd said, kneeling in front of him, hands on his shoulders to force him to look into her eyes. She'd looked more serious than he'd ever seen her, lips thin and forehead furrowed. "If it was down to me, we wouldn't be going at all, but your dad's been making plans for this trip for months now, and he won't break it for hell or high water. So you don't talk to any strangers, you stay in public areas and stay near me, and if anyone tries to talk to you or get you to go anywhere, come find me *immediately*."

That little speech had sent a lot of Bobby's excitement about visiting his father's hometown straight down the drain, but now that he was at the circus his mother's warning seemed far away and unimportant compared to the buttery smells of funnel cake and popcorn in the air and the weight of carefully-saved quarters in his pocket. Grinning ear-to-ear, he got into line for the ferris wheel. He'd never been on one before, but he'd heard that you could see the whole country from the top. He knew *that* wasn't true, of course (they didn't call him Bob the Brain for nothing, and he knew they meant it to be insulting but he kind of liked it), but he imagined you definitely could see a very long way from up there.

He was just craning his head back to see the top of the wheel when

the hand landed on his shoulder. He let out a small shriek, caught completely off-guard, and whipped around to see-

-a clown?

A very, very tall clown. Bobby was used to being shorter even than a lot of the other kids in his class, but this clown was even taller than his dad, who was the tallest person he knew. Bobby had to tilt his head back a little bit to see his face clearly.

For a moment, the clown's eyes looked flat and silver, like shiny quarters, but it must have been because they caught the bright lights of the ferris wheel, because Bobby blinked and they were blue. Warm, welcoming blue.

He relaxed marginally, heart still thumping from the surprise. It was just a clown. There were supposed to be clowns and circuses. Nothing to be scared of.

The clown smiled, exposing teeth that were perfectly white and even, though for a moment it looked like there were a few too many of them. The gloved hand not resting like a heavy weight on his shoulder was clutching the strings of a whole bunch of balloons, what looked like dozens of them, all different colors. Bobby had to squint to see what the white lettering said:

I <3 DERRY

"He-llo, Bobby," the clown said. The voice that seemed a little too high and uneven for such a big man, and Bobby giggled despite himself. "Want a balloon?"

Bobby bounced on his toes, looking up at the rainbow bouquet, one hand reaching into his pocket where his precious quarters rested. "My mom told me not to talk to strangers."

"Aw, but I'm not a stranger! I'm... mmm, I'm Mr. Baldo! See, now I'm not a stranger!" He held out the handful of balloons almost eagerly. "What color do you want, Bobby?"

Bobby bit down on his lip thoughtfully as he stared at the balloons, not seeing the way the clown licked his lips with a tongue that was a

little too long and a little too red. “Um... blue?”

“Blue!” the clown said in that odd, high-pitched voice, stretching the word out into two syllables: *bluh-hoo!* “A blue balloon for Bobby!”

It didn’t occur to Bobby to ask how the clown knew his name. He reached for the proffered balloon, but the clown pulled it back just before his fingers closed around the string.

He frowned, uncomprehending.

“You know, Bobby,” the clown said, rolling his name around in his mouth, “you look like a smart kid.”

“I guess,” Bobby said, shifting uncomfortably on his feet. “Some of the kids at school call me Bob the Brain.”

The clown burst out laughing. It wasn’t a nice laugh, though, like when Bobby told his mother a story from school. It sounded more like the cracked cackling sound the crows made from the branches outside his window.

“Bob the Brain! That’s funny! Well, Bobby, you’re smart enough to see this is a pretty long line, right?”

Bobby, who was indeed not used to large quantities of people in any circumstance and had never seen this many people in one place in his life, looked doubtfully up the line. It did look pretty long.

“I guess.”

“Well! You know, there’s another ride over on the other side of the park. It’s called the, heh, the Whirligig! Much more fun than this rotten old ferris wheel, and there’s never a line.”

Bobby frowned. The line really did look pretty long, long enough that he might not even get on before dark, and he needed to be back at the hotel room before then or his mom would be mad.

“I’ll walk you over,” the clown invited, holding out a gloved hand.

Those eyes really were very, very blue.

Bobby reached out-

“Bobby! What did I tell you about talking to strangers?”

His mother’s voice startled him into pulling his hand back, but he didn’t look back over at her immediately. Instead, he was still staring up at the clown’s face, so he saw the exact moment the clown changed.

For a moment, he didn’t know how he could have ever mistaken it for a person. There were so many teeth, ringing its mouth all the way around and going back and back and back like a lamprey, its eyes were molten silver, and it snarled.

Then it was just a clown again, and Bobby was taking shaking steps backwards towards his mother.

“Interruptions,” the clown snarled, then gave him a little wave. “Be seeing you, Bobby.”

Then he was just gone, and his mom was there grabbing him in a desperate hug.

“Mom?” he mumbled into her shoulder. “I want to go home now.”

Thirty years later, he would remember that image of a face that *opened*, of a lamprey mouth ringed all the way around with deadly teeth that went back and back and back, as he stared down the throat of a monster moments before his world went black.

Be seeing you, Bobby.

Author's Note:

Pennywise is... so fucking hard to write, you guys. He’s such a weird, animalistic, otherworldly character I can’t wrap my brain around him. Hope I did okay.